

THE
MASSACHUSETTS TEACHER.

Vol. V. No. 4.]

C. C. CHASE, EDITOR OF THIS NUMBER.

(April, 1852.)

NEPONSET RIVER.

A FEW weeks since, I had the pleasure of meeting, in convention, a large collection of the teachers of Massachusetts, and long shall I remember the occasion as one, to me, of the highest interest; for I was re-assured that there are, enlisted in our ranks, men of such talent, enterprise, and professional zeal, that the time is not far distant, when we shall be no longer forced to rely upon the members of the other professions, to manage our associations, to oversee our business, and to do our thinking for us. Far be it from me, however, to undervalue the aid which we have received, especially from the clergymen of Massachusetts. We thank them for their approbation, their counsel, their zeal in the cause in which we labor; but we beg of them to believe that there are some things on which we have a few thoughts of our own. We protest that the time of acting as machines in developing the theories of other men, has past away, and we now claim that, like the members of other professions, we are the best judges of what we are able to do, and how it is to be done.

But I propose, in this article, to discuss only one point in regard to which the professional teacher is bound to resist any farther encroachment on the part of the other professions. I refer to *the unequal share of labor which we are called upon to perform.*

This in truth is no new complaint; for Mercury himself, the father of all pedagogues, as Æsculapius was the father of all the doctors, used to grumble most bitterly at the amount of

work which he was forced to do, both in the realms of Pluto and on the top of Olympus. Indeed, he was almost the only god who had any labor to perform. He must instruct the orators, teach the boxers, run with Jupiter's love letters, carry round the punch, and do various other chores, both above ground and below ground, too numerous to be mentioned.

Such is fast becoming the condition of the teachers of Massachusetts. The list of studies which once consisted of scarcely more than Reading, Writing, Spelling, and Arithmetic, is now so large that a page of small pica will hardly contain it. The doctors require us to teach Anatomy and Physiology, the Clergymen call upon us to aid them in Natural Theology and Moral Science, and the Lawyers will find that the pupils of some of our schools are grappling with Political Science and Constitutional Law. In my own school, we have enough studies to frighten the shade of any old schoolmaster of the eighteenth century, and you may judge of my surprise when, on my way to the convention, above referred to, I was gravely asked by a distinguished friend of schools, why my boys did not attend to Intellectual Philosophy and Moral Science; and the first lecturer whom I heard on my arrival, urged the introduction into our schools, of the study of Meteorology, and a "Book of Common Things," and complained, with some severity, that teachers did not take their pupils out upon the hills to study the rocks and the trees, and, indeed, to open the great "Book of Nature"—a book almost as large as the work referred to in the last of John the Evangelist!! Alas, who is sufficient for these things? The lecturer was a clergyman, a distinguished writer upon the subject of common schools. To show the alarming state of ignorance now existing in respect to this last study which he proposed to introduce, he stated the astonishing fact that, in a certain school, he once asked a girl where Neponset River rises, and (oh, horrible) she could not tell! She was a good geographer, and lived close by the Neponset, but she had neglected the Book of Nature, and where the river came from the poor girl could n't tell.

We confess that some remedy should be found for such alarming ignorance. And now, inasmuch as the clergymen are all our friends, if, at their next general convention, they will return the many compliments which they have received from us, by inviting me to address them, I will endeavor to repay the ten thousand kind suggestions which we have received at their hands, to propose a fair division of the labor of instructing the community, and so to arrange the business that hereafter young folks of twelve years of age shall really know as much more than men of sixty, as some people seem to think they ought to know. Reverend gentlemen, I have not chosen my text, but

the "heads of my discourse" I will cheerfully give you, especially as there is some doubt about getting an invitation to deliver a more complete production.

1. I begin by flattering the clergy a little in order to conciliate their feelings and gain their attention.

2. I very modestly confess my ignorance of clerical matters, and ask them to pardon all my blunders.

3. I gently hint to them that although their instruction is confined almost exclusively to the simple study of Theology, yet even in this branch, such is their defective mode of teaching, that their parishioners of fifty years of age are in a state of lamentable ignorance. I enforce this point in my discourse by asserting that I have asked ten church-going persons "What is the chief end of man?" and not one of them answered correctly, and not two agreed—that I have found on diligent inquiry that even church-members have no well defined notions of their own total depravity, and have not half so clear conceptions of the three theological persons as the boys of the town school have of the three grammatical ones.

4. I show that their instructions are greatly confused, by their habit of frequently changing the subject of their discourses, —preaching, for example, upon the fall of Adam in the forenoon, and improving a railroad disaster in the afternoon of the same day.

5. I next proceed to show by statistics that the people of the parishes grossly neglect to improve the inferior advantages which they are permitted to enjoy—that their actual average attendance at church is only 43 per cent.—that if *non-attendance* were added to *non-attendance*, this per cent. would fall below 22, and that upon examining ten persons of sixty years of age, and ten members of the Sabbath school, in the same congregation, on the catechism, it most conclusively appeared that the pastor's instructions were worth just nothing at all—the young people being, on some points, really ahead of their grandfathers.

6. I give some hints, in a friendly way, about preaching old sermons, and too frequent exchanges, all of which I do in such a patronizing and affectionate manner, that not the slightest cause of offence is given.

7. I propose to put the church affairs under a regular, efficient system of superintendence. A committee is to be annually appointed, to consist of Lawyers, Schoolmasters, and Apothecaries, whose duty it shall be to ascertain, by personal examination, the qualifications of all candidates for the ministry, to re-examine them every year after their election, to give them, as they may need, special advice in regard to the best mode of preaching, and to publish an impartial report at the close of the year, in which the clergymen of the town or city shall be ranked

according to their respective merits, and their faults distinctly pointed out, that they may improve by the suggestions of the committee, and thus, in future, all strive to be best.

8. The schoolroom and church are hereafter to be under the same roof, and the clergyman and schoolmaster are to make a fair division of the labor of instructing the people of the parish. The clergyman is to spend six hours per day in teaching Theology, Moral Science, and the great "Book of Nature;" he is to lead the whole people twice a week out upon some hill or meadow, or into somebody's pasture, and there tell them all about the rocks, and fences, and trees, and grass, and all the wonders of creation; while the schoolmaster is to instruct in all the arts and sciences, as heretofore, is to relieve the clergyman of all preaching upon railroad and steamboat accidents, and travels in Europe, and is also to solemnize all marriages, among the young people, and kiss the bride, and take the fee.

TEACHING BY EXAMPLE.

EXTRACT FROM A TEACHER'S PRIZE ESSAY, BARNSTABLE COUNTY.

IN no way do we teach more truly—in no way more indelibly stamp the impress of our own character—in no way do we gain more entire confidence, than by virtuous example.

The mother, on the green "Emerald Isle," who would educate her child in the Romish faith, does it not by lectures or arguments, but simply by giving expressions to her faith in all her acts. Does she fear the priest? She tells it in her looks and conversation. Does she revere the saints? She manifests her veneration by bowing before their images and uttering her "Ave Marias" as though she were in their awe-inspiring presence. Is danger impending? She kneels before a cross, or suspends one from her neck as a talisman for averting the evil. Thus she in fact teaches the child to feel her own emotions—and thus she forms for him that belief which long years of rigid teachings to the contrary, may not eradicate, for the character of an individual, if not acted upon by opposing influences, naturally assumes that of the model he is wont to contemplate.

And so the Indian mother teaches her babe to fear the Great Spirit. When He speaks in the thunder and breathes in the forest, her spirit feels His presence, and she bows in heartfelt awe; and ere the babe has once gone forth from the parental wigwam, she will have taught it most effectually to reverence the Great Spirit. Many a teacher as well as mother, of Massachusetts, might learn a valuable lesson from these daughters

of the forest. They seldom use the rod—never scold, but by the silent yet sure influence of example they instil the lessons they wish to impart, and acquire that control over the habits and character which human calculation may not estimate.

DRAWING

ON THE PRINCIPLES OF PESTALOZZI, FOR THE CULTIVATION OF
TASTE AND INVENTION.

BY PROF. WM. J. WHITAKER,

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Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1851, by William J. Whitaker, in the
Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

FIRST COURSE.

EXERCISE.

1. Combine 4 right and 4 acute angles.

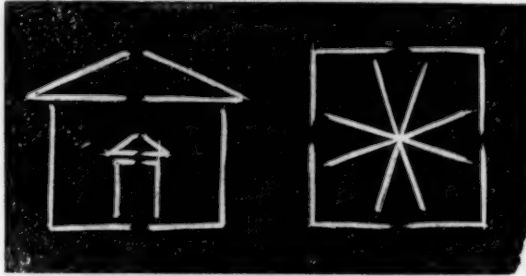


ILLUSTRATION 1.

This we call a compound exercise, from its being made up of two elements, each of which should be perfectly apparent to the observer, combined only relatively. We divide these exercises into two parts, pointing out to the pupil the necessity of clearness in the drawing, and also purity of conception. Teachers should never imagine that quantity is the test of skill. It is quality we require. A good design, drawn with clearness and precision, is worth a hundred poorly conceived and meanly executed ones. Therefore it is best to insist rather on the first productions of the pencil being neat and accurate, than multitudinous. We first direct the pupil to draw solid forms, or those figures bounded by a line or a series of lines, in their simple form, as they are the best to cultivate correctness of eye and hand; then to let the mind wander more into imagination, and wreath its own rich fancies, still keeping in mind the all-important necessity of truth. It should also be pointed out to them, that combination or invention, to be good, depends on certain principles, such as order, uniformity, harmony of arrangement, and form of expression.

The simplest designs are generally the best, and in practical designing are the ones that are most in demand, because simplicity is the soul of purity, and purity is always pleasant to those who require the material it is applied to, either for ornamental or useful purposes.

2. Combine 4 right and 4 obtuse angles.

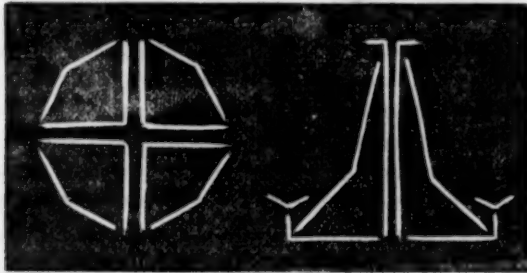


ILLUSTRATION 2.

3. Combine 4 right, 4 acute, and 4 obtuse angles.

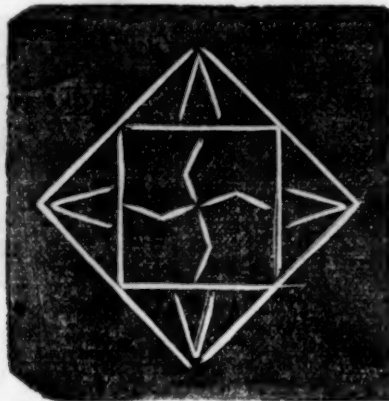


ILLUSTRATION 3.

This completes the exercises on angles, and we now turn to a different element.

Triangles.

Right, acute, obtuse-angled triangles.



ILLUSTRATION 4.

These figures must be clearly defined to the pupils, and the difference between each pointed out. We use them only in

their simple form, as above. With this element a less number of figures will be produced than by the former exercises, as they admit of far less modification, but are nevertheless essential to the cultivation of taste. For if we can by careful thought so arrange a sterile element as to produce a graceful form, how much more shall we be able to produce the same or a higher effect with forms that are in themselves beautiful.

EXERCISES.

1. Combine 4 right-angled triangles.
2. Combine 4 acute-angled triangles.
3. Combine 4 obtuse-angled triangles.
4. Combine 4 right and 4 acute-angled triangles.
5. Combine 4 right and 4 obtuse-angled triangles.
6. Combine 4 right, 4 acute, and 4 obtuse-angled triangles.
7. Combine any number of triangles.

This is the first unlimited exercise we make use of, and is, in fact, the first real lesson in design. Any number of triangles, of any kind, may include all the varieties, or only one or two, as may best suit the taste of the designer. But purity of design, rather than the combination of a large number of the figures, should be aimed at. This should be told to the pupil and firmly imprinted on his mind, as it is a common fault with beginners, to judge by size rather than by the quality of their work.

Let not the exercises be hurried over, but always dwelt sufficiently long upon to insure a perfect understanding of the work in hand; or the future progress of the pupil will be considerably retarded, every step being built upon the experience of the past, and holding relation with it.

(To be continued.)

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE AT LOWELL.

THE Secretary of the Board of Education has formed the plan of holding Teachers' Institutes in the cities, and perhaps, also, in the large towns of the State, upon the afternoons and evenings of Wednesday and Saturday, and the evenings of the intervening days during the term time of the schools. The evils of depriving the teacher of a portion of his vacation, or of requiring a special vacation of the schools, to enable him to attend the Institutes, is by this arrangement avoided. The Institute at Lowell, which closed on the 28th of February, was the second of the series, and was attended with such complete success, as to establish, in the mind of the Secretary, the feasi-

bility of his new plan. The following notes upon the exercises of this Institute are presented to the readers of the Teacher :

WEDNESDAY.

Professor Guyot delivered two lectures upon Physical Geography, in which he exhibited an amount of knowledge respecting the physical condition of the globe, which, I believe, no American scholar possesses. This gentleman, a Swiss by birth, was educated as a geographer, in one of the German Universities, just as a man is educated in this country as a lawyer or physician. Arriving in America only about two years since, he has already acquired great fluency in the use of the English language, and has placed himself at the head of his profession. He is now employed by the Board of Education, to give instruction to the teachers of our Common Schools, respecting the best modes of teaching the science of Geography.

Prof. Guyot entirely discards the old method of filling the memory of the pupil with a confused mass of facts in regard to the boundaries of States, the location of capes and towns, the names of ponds and streams, the population of cities, &c., &c., and insists upon laying the foundation of geographical knowledge in a thorough acquaintance with the great features of the surface of the globe. He presents maps of various continents to exhibit to the eye, not the towns and cities, but the great mountain ranges, the plateaus and valleys, the elevation of the various portions above the level of the ocean, the systems of lakes and rivers, and those great features which influence the climate and productions of any spot upon the surface. The American continent, for example, is narrow and exposed to the influence of two great oceans, and is therefore visited by frequent and powerful storms of rain ; while the old world is very broad, and far less exposed to the oceans, and, for these reasons, its climate is so much more dry than ours, that the American reader, who has been born in a land of storms of rain and snow, finds it difficult to understand the frequent allusion of the sacred writers to a "dry and thirsty land."

Any attempt to withdraw the mind from unimportant particulars and fix it upon general principles, is worthy of the encouragement of the friends of education ; and if the pupils of our schools can acquire a sound knowledge of the great physical causes which decide the climate, the productions, and even the character of the inhabitants, of any spot upon the earth—if, for example, they are able to explain, upon general principles, why Boston is so much colder than European cities in the same latitude, why the climate of Washington is so different from that of San Francisco, and why the olive and the orange, the apple and the peach, refuse to flourish except in particular loca-

tions, I doubt not that the study of the important science in question will become far more useful and interesting than it has heretofore been.

THURSDAY EVENING.

The continued interest exhibited by the teachers and other citizens of Lowell, in the exercises of the Institute, was gratifying to the friends of schools, as well as encouraging to the gentlemen particularly engaged in giving instruction in the various departments of study.

In his lecture of this evening, Prof. Guyot gave us a very interesting exhibition of his mode of teaching the science of Geography, of which I have presented an imperfect sketch in my preceding remarks.

He selected for illustration the continent of South America, as being the most simple in its physical structure, and exhibiting most clearly the effects of great physical features upon the climate, the vegetation, and the political condition of the various countries which compose it. Its surface consists, 1st. Of a vast system of mountain ranges, the Andes, which, in a double chain, skirt the very verge of the whole western borders of the continent. 2d. Of extensive plateaus, or elevated plains, which are found especially within the borders of Brazil. 3d. Of immense low and level plains, which occupy the central and far the larger portion of South America, and are so vast in their extent that the traveller may pursue a journey of two thousand miles, and ascend not a single mountain in his course.

How, now, do these great physical features affect the climate and vegetation of the various parts of the continent? Commencing at the southern extremity, the region of Patagonia, the winds which uniformly blow from some westerly point of compass, lose their moisture upon the western sides of the precipitous Andes, and the vast plains east of the mountains are parched with drought, are almost destitute of all kinds of vegetation, and can never become the abodes of civilized man; whilst the western side of the mountain ranges is visited with almost perpetual rain, and the vegetation exhibits a most luxuriant growth. In the island of Chiloe, for example, it is a common remark that it rains six days in the week and is cloudy on the seventh, while the amount of vegetable growth is so enormous that the inhabitants are absolutely precluded from cultivating the soil in the interior of the island, and the traveller pursues his journey upon a mass of vegetation which covers the earth to the depth of fifteen feet!

But further north, and, indeed, throughout the whole central and larger portion of the Andes, the trade winds striking the eastern side of the mountain ranges, pass the summit deprived

of their moisture, and thus leave the western coast of the continent so dry and barren, that in some locations, for several years, not a drop of rain has been known to fall; while the immense plains which constitute the greater portion of South America, receive the benefit of the winds from the Atlantic, and, unlike the plains of Patagonia, are covered with the most luxuriant vegetation and innumerable herds of cattle. The interior portions of the prairies of Buenos Ayres are subject, however, to occasional droughts, one of which proved so fatal to the herds of cattle, which are there raised in vast numbers, for the value of their hides, that it is supposed that one million must have perished; and one wealthy citizen, who was the owner of twenty thousand head, found, when the drought was past, that not one of them was left alive. But of all portions of South America, the almost boundless plains of the Amazon are most remarkable for the richness of the soil, the luxuriance of the forests, the warmth of the climate, the vastness of the rivers, and the great amount of rain which the tropical winds from the Atlantic pour upon the surface,—amounting annually to twelve or seventeen feet in depth. These plains, the largest in the world, produce palm-trees of forty varieties, some of which grow to nearly twice the height of any spire in the city of Lowell.

The plateaus of Brazil afford another illustration of the influence of mountain ranges upon the productiveness of the soil. While the eastern coasts of that country are among the most beautiful and most fertile portions of the surface of the globe, the more western parts, which, by ranges of mountains, are deprived of the benefit of the trade winds from the Atlantic, though affording the richest diamonds in the world, are dry and barren, compared with the rest of the interior of the continent.

But I forbear to follow the lecturer into more minute detail upon this interesting theme. It is sufficient to say that the whole subject of Physical Geography is so full of instruction and interest, that it will, of itself, secure the place in our system of education which its merits deserve.

FRIDAY EVENING.

The interest which the exercises of the Institute elicited in our community, was attested by the patience and attention with which a large audience listened to the protracted instructions of this evening. The principal design of these Institutes is, not to communicate information to the experienced teacher, but to suggest, especially to the more inexperienced, the best modes of imparting, in the school-room, the knowledge they already possess. It is creditable, therefore, to the wisdom of the Secretary of the Board of Education, that the instructions of the

Institutes are confined to the simple elements of the art of teaching. If another course would better please a popular audience, it would far less subserve the true interests of the cause of education.

The impatient spirit of Yankee enterprise has even entered the American school-room, and we find that the child has learned from the father, the habit of grasping at imperfect results, for want of patience in securing the most approved and most effectual means. Hence it is, that, although our system of education is far superior to that of any other part of the world, in respect to the expansive benevolence with which it bestows its advantages upon every class and condition of society, yet we must all acknowledge that it has not secured to the mass of the people, anything like a systematic and thorough knowledge of the primary elements of education. The American youth almost uniformly commits two radical mistakes in regard to acquiring his education—he attempts too much while attending school—he leaves the school before he has perfected himself in a single department of human knowledge. The school time of a European youth is three years longer than that of an American, and it is greatly to be lamented that our boys are, at the present time, leaving the school and entering upon business life at an earlier age than they were a few years since.

There is no subject upon which the community needs to be enlightened by the educators of our land, more than upon that of the mischievous effects of forcing our boys through a rapid and imperfect course of study, and pressing them into the ranks of business men, before their minds are thoroughly disciplined in any department of knowledge, and even before it is known to what pursuit their talents are best adapted.

SATURDAY.

The interesting exercises of the Institute closed upon Saturday afternoon. Although six different lectures were delivered during the day, and the weather was particularly unfavorable, yet neither weariness nor the storm prevented the attendance of a large audience till the last moment. I will not attempt to give a detailed account of the lectures, but will only indulge in a few general remarks.

I confess I was much interested in the lecturer upon the art of drawing. He is a young Englishman, of bashful mien, a delicate frame, and a black and dreamy eye. He seems to have fallen tenderly, not to say desperately, in love with nature, and is a perfect enthusiast in the art of imitating her beautiful forms. He speaks "right on," in a low, poetic, elegant and monotonous style, like the strain of an Eolian harp-string; and, often forgetting that he is engaged in teaching the

art of drawing, he flies off into sundry episodes and rhapsodies upon the lovely and the beautiful, which are often as pleasing as a song, and indicate much delicacy of feeling and refinement of taste. His love for nature is evidently most sincere, and he would, perhaps, give more for a mullen leaf than for a Rail-Road Bank bill. Such devotion is worthy of all admiration, and I pray that his sweetheart may never turn coquette.

"I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here,"

but he gave us leave to think what we chose about his fancies, a license which I am now improving. By way of reparation, however, for the naughty things I have said, I must add that if any of my friends inquire of me where they may best learn the art of drawing, I will send them straightway to Prof. Whitaker.

His theory seems to be briefly this: All natural objects are beautiful, and, when closely examined, are found to be composed of true geometrical forms and bounded by regular geometrical lines. The work, therefore, of the student in drawing, consists, first, in acquiring the skill of making exact geometrical forms, and then the art of combining these forms so gracefully and faithfully as to imitate the beauties of natural objects.

Prof. W. cannot fail to interest and inspire the mind of the intelligent pupil with something of his own zeal, and we heard from him, with much interest, the pleasing incident of a little boy in a ragged school in London, who travelled ten miles to secure a leaf of a certain tree, from which to draw a picture with his pencil; and of still another who actually counted the geometrical lines which composed the contour of his father's dog.

It would be difficult to report the lectures of Mr. Colburn upon teaching Arithmetic. It is, perhaps, enough to say, that he insists upon so thorough a mental drill in the first rudiments of the study, that the pupil shall not only understand the theory of his processes, but shall also acquire such a facility in operating upon simple numbers that he shall arrive at correct results, as if by intuition—a facility which is acquired by many experienced accountants, and which is within the power of any pupil of ordinary ability. Mr. Colburn himself afforded an excellent illustration of the truth of the last remark; for he marshalled the nine Arabian digits with such promptness and precision, and in such rapid and complicated evolutions, about the chambers of his memory, that we began to suspect that the minds of both Zerah and Warren were reproduced in that of their namesake, and to be somewhat alarmed lest the Colburn family were fated to monopolize all the mathematical genius of the country.

As there is no art of embalming sound, so there is none of reporting the eloquent lectures of Prof. Russell on the subject of Elocution. What instrument so delicate, so melodious, so wonderful, as the human voice, and how much is it to be lamented that so many fail to prize so priceless a treasure! Who that listens to the instructions of Prof. R., is not induced to make this reflection?

We believe that the exercises of the Institute will serve to confirm and refresh the zeal of the teachers of our city, and to strengthen and encourage them in the performance of the duties of their office. But the zeal of the teacher will not alone suffice; there must be a more regular attendance of the pupils, and they must remain longer under our charge, or our system of instruction can never be truly developed, or our youth receive a finished education.

In closing the exercises of the Institute, Dr. Sears, after expressing his thanks for the favor which his enterprise had received from the School Committee and people of Lowell, took occasion to assure the teachers of our schools, that their zeal, their sympathy, their patient attention and protracted presence, had not only afforded him high gratification, and answered his most sanguine expectations, but had established, in his own mind, the feasibility of this new plan of holding Institutes in cities, in the evenings of the week and on those afternoons when the schools are not in session.

To these remarks the teachers of the city responded, by passing the following resolutions:

Resolved, That the business of the teacher, like that of the clergyman, the attorney, and the physician, is, and ought to be, a distinct and independent profession—a profession which, to be understood, must be practised—a profession which is worthy of our best talents, our warmest devotion, and our most untiring zeal.

Resolved, That in order to secure, in the most effectual manner, the dignity of our profession and the best interests of those entrusted to our charge, we are bound to sympathize with, to encourage, and sustain each other in the faithful performance of all our duties, and to favor every institution which is calculated to elevate the teacher and subserve the cause of sound and wholesome instruction.

Resolved, That the Teachers' Institutes, as they are now conducted in this State, are worthy of our cordial approbation: 1. Because they are conducted by a gentleman who is himself a practical teacher, and to whom we delight to look, not as a sentimental visionary or a censorious critic, but an elder brother and a faithful friend. 2. Because practical teachers are employed to conduct the exercises of these Institutes, to whom no higher compliment can be paid by us, than to ask them to "look around"—our protracted presence is more significant than any words which we can utter.

RESOLUTIONS ON THE DEATH OF A. A. BALLOU.

DIED in Bridgewater, of Typhus Fever, on Sunday, Feb. 8, aged 18 years and 7 months, Mr. Adin A. Ballou, an Assistant Teacher in the State Normal School.

He was the only remaining son of Rev. Adin Ballou of Hopedale, in Milford. In his life he exhibited in an unusually high degree, the virtues which spring from a Christian character. He possessed powers of mind and qualities of heart which promised for him high and very extended influence. He enjoyed the warmest affection of all who knew him. At a meeting of the Teachers and Pupils of the School in which he had labored, the following resolutions were adopted, and after being subscribed by each individual, were transmitted to the bereaved parents of the deceased:

Whereas, It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from among us, in the midst of his usefulness, our beloved fellow-laborer, Mr. Adin A. Ballou, the bright and pure morning of whose life gave promise of a day of wide and most salutary influence in the community, and whose goodness of heart and greatness of purpose had bound us, individually, to him in ties never to be forgotten, therefore,

Resolved, That we consider his death an irreparable loss to our School, and to the community generally; and one that calls for the expression of deep and heartfelt sorrow.

Resolved, That we sincerely sympathize with the bereaved family of the deceased, and deeply mourn with them the sudden and sad event which has deprived them of a beloved companion, and us of a dear friend and a kind and faithful instructor; yet believing him to be of the pure in heart, to whom it is promised that they shall see God, we find a sufficient consolation in the thought that he has begun a glorious progress in a more exalted and a happier sphere.

Resolved, That in this event we are again reminded of the shortness and uncertainty of life; and that we would not let it pass without endeavoring to impress upon our own characters, in some measure, the shining virtues of our departed friend, and thus, with the help of our Father in Heaven, sanctify to ourselves this dispensation of His Providence. E.

“THE great mistake among us in the educating our children is, that in our daughters we take care of their persons and neglect their minds; in our sons we are so intent upon adorning their minds, that we wholly neglect their bodies.”—*The Spectator*.

EXACTNESS IN TEACHING.

Teacher.—What does the denominator of a fraction show ?

1st Scholar.—The denominator shows the size of the parts expressed by the fraction.

Teacher.—Very well. But *how* does the denominator show the size of the parts ?

2d Scholar.—The denominator shows the size of the parts by showing how many such parts the unit is divided into.

Teacher.—Very well. Now what other answer can you give ?

3d Scholar.—The denominator shows the size of the parts by showing how many such parts make a unit.

Teacher.—Very well indeed. I prefer this answer to the other, though many good teachers prefer the first, or at least they teach it. Even the gentleman who lectured upon Arithmetic at the last Institute I attended taught the same. But I think if they should investigate the matter more carefully, they would see sufficient reasons for preferring the view given in the second answer. Sometimes it may be well to adopt the view given in the first answer ; but ordinarily the other view will be found much more natural and direct, especially when a fraction is considered an expression of division, and in all operations upon the denominator of a fraction. I would not except even the formation of fractions. Thus, we will describe a circle, call it a unit, and express it by the figure 1. Now bisect the circle and express one of the parts by the same figure 1, but to distinguish this from the expression of a unit we will write the figure 2 under it, thus, $\frac{1}{2}$, to show either how many such parts the unit is divided into, or how many such parts make the unit. So far either view is natural. But now let us bisect the other part by a radius, and express one of the quadrants by the same figure 1, and to distinguish it write under it the figure 4, thus, $\frac{1}{4}$, not to show how many parts the unit is divided into, for it is yet divided into only three parts ; but obviously to show how many such parts would make the unit. Similar remarks might be made upon further sub-divisions.

Teacher.—Now reduce $\frac{1}{4}$ to units.

4th Scholar.—Since the unit is divided into thirteen equal parts—

Teacher.—No. The next.

5th Scholar.—Since the unit is divided into four equal parts, there will be as many units as 4 is contained times in 13, which is $3\frac{1}{4}$.

Teacher.—Pretty well. Will the next explain the same ?

6th Scholar.—Since there are thirteen such parts that every four of them would make a unit, there will be as many units as 4 is contained times in 13, which is $3\frac{1}{4}$.

Teacher.—Very well indeed. Do you not see how much more direct the reasoning is when we consider the denominator as showing how many parts make a unit?

This brief sketch of a recitation is given to direct the attention of teachers to their modes of expression. It is thought if teachers would carefully observe, they would detect themselves in using and teaching expressions that are not well adapted to convey the true meaning. In cases where ratio is involved there is great looseness of expression. Thus, "ten times larger," instead of ten times as large, is very common. Larger is entirely indefinite, and when multiplied by 10 cannot give a definite product. Much less can "ten times smaller" be a definite quantity. It may truly be said there is good authority for these expressions. But would it not be better to use expressions that do not require the learner to overcome some absurdity before they can be understood? Is it well to multiply difficulties unnecessarily?

Do not teachers often put their questions in such vague and indefinite terms as to confuse the minds of the scholars? As a sample of such questions witness the following, which are selected from questions used by the School Committee of a neighboring city in the examination of their High School:

1. At the North Pole what is the length of the longest day and night? At what time does the sun rise and set?
2. Answer the same at the Equator.
3. What is the size of a regular hexagon that may be inscribed in a circle?
4. How many regular polyhedrons can there be?
5. Suppose a wheel turns twice in tracking $16\frac{1}{2}$ ft. and that it turns 200 times in going round a bowling green, what is the area in acres, roods and rods?
6. Into how many triangles may every polygon be divided?
7. How many figures are there which will exactly fill the angular space about a point?
8. How is an angle at the circumference of a circle measured?

This list might be enlarged, but it is unnecessary, and equally so for me to point out the faults. They are sufficiently obvious, but the more the questions are examined, the more absurd and ridiculous they will appear. Teachers may justly feel aggrieved at having their schools examined by such questions, and their own professional character deduced from the tabular arrangement of the answers. Then would not they do well to scrutinize their own habits, that they may not be chargeable with like injustice to their pupils?

J. S. R.

A FEW MOMENTS WITH OLD POETS.

PERHAPS no feature in the ancient classics is more interesting to the modern scholar, than the exhibition which they afford of the peculiar modes of thought which engaged the minds of men two thousand years ago. The following free translation of an Ode of Horace, which I find, in pencil mark, among my papers which begin to show the marks of age, exhibits a condition of society and a habit of thought which belong to other ages than our own :

Oh, great Mæcenas, born from ancient kings,
 Thou from whom all my aid—my glory springs,
 Let not the husbandman who loves to toil,
 And reap his harvests from his native soil,
 Ever forsake the quiet of his home,
 And tempt the deep, and o'er its billows roam.
 Some all their glory in the chariot place,
 And love to scour Olympia in the race ;
 With burning wheels the rapid chariot flies,
 And palms exalt the victor to the skies.
 One foolish man of vain applause is proud,
 And grasps the honors of the fickle crowd.
 Another fills his barns with stores of grain,
 Gathered from off the distant Libyan plain.
 The merchant fears the winds that lash the shore,
 And loves his ease within his lazy store.
 Failing in trade, he fits his ships again,
 And seeks for wealth once more upon the main.
 Another loves to sip the good old wine,
 And waste his time, and in the shade recline.
 Some scorn their mothers' prayers and rush to war,
 When the loud trumpet calls them from afar.
 In the cold north the hunter leads his life,
 And leaves the embraces of a tender wife.
 He loves his dogs upon the deer to set,
 Or chase the wild boar that has torn his net.
 But *thee*, Mæcenas, other joys suffice,
 For ivy wreaths exalt thee to the skies.
 I seek the cool grove, wandering far away,
 Where gentle choirs of nymphs and satyrs play,
 Euterpe sings with music soft and sweet,
 And Polyhymnia cheers my cool retreat.
 Oh, make me but the poet of the lyre,
 And my proud heart shall to the stars aspire.

Probably no better illustration could be given of the subject and mode of thought of the poet Anacreon, than the little gem entitled "Cupid and the Honey Bee," of which the following is a liberal translation :

Once when Cupid chanced to linger
 'Mid the flowers thoughtlessly,
 There pounced upon his dimpled finger
 A cruel little honey bee.

"Oh, mother, mother, I am dying,"
 Little wounded Cupid cried,
 As he hastened, running, flying,
 Up to lovely Venus' side.

"'T was a little serpent killed me,
 Flying on a tiny wing,
 And with cruel pain he filled me,
 By the venom of his sting."

"If you die, dear," said the mother,
 "Wounded by a honey bee,
 How shall fare that hapless lover,
 Whose poor heart is pierced by thee!"

SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND.

(Continued from the Teacher for March.)

The following is a selection from the questions used at the "General Examination of Schoolmistresses," before they received their certificates:

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS.

Write a short account of the life of any one of the following persons:—Bishop Wilson, Sir Matthew Hale, Richard Hooker, Bishop Ken, Henry Martyn, James Watt.

Write a short account of any one of the following women:—Queen Elizabeth, Grace Darling, Flora M'Ivor.

Write an account of any person deceased whom you consider to have been one of the greatest benefactors to the human race within the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries.

What class of biography should you consider best to be placed in the hands of young people? and why?

NATURAL HISTORY.

Point out the respects in which water fowl are peculiarly fitted for the element in which they find their food.

What peculiarity is observable in regard to the colors of the same animals in different climates?

Mention the original countries of our domestic fowls, and the dates at which the more modern were introduced into Europe.

What are *deciduous* trees? Mention the principal that are to be found in England.

What flowers grow most commonly in the woods, and at what times of the year do they flower?

Describe the *cruciferous* orders of plants, and their general characteristics and properties.

What common plants are noted for their medicinal uses?

What garden flowers are easily cultivated, and at what season of the year should they be put in the ground, and when will they flower?

Describe the difference between *endogenous* and *exogenous* plants, both in appearance and internal structure. Are these divisions known by any other name?

What articles of food are principally used by the inhabitants of Lapland? England? Italy?

What fish visit the coasts and rivers of England, and at what seasons of the year?

Give a brief account of the geographical distribution of animals of prey.

DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

What vegetables are most useful in a cottager's garden? and at what times of the year should they be planted?

How is potato starch made? Is it in all respects equal to the starch commonly sold in the shops?

Are copper sauce-pans liable to any objections? and if so, to what?

What puddings are cheapest, most wholesome, and most easily prepared?

Calculate the loss to a laborer in the course of a year, which would arise from his buying tea and sugar in very small instead of larger quantities.

Enumerate the different stitches used in sewing, their degrees of strength and neatness, the rapidity with which a given length of each can be done, and the uses to which they are respectively applied.

Is it an advantage to a laborer to receive his wages in small payments frequently, rather than in large payments at greater intervals? and why, morally and economically? What are the best methods of healing burns and scalds?

To what illnesses are workmen in different trades peculiarly subject? and what precautions are suited to each case?

ARITHMETIC.

Explain the working of the following questions:

Multiply 5,867 by 243. How many bushels of wheat are worth 16 bushels of barley, when wheat is worth 53 shillings per quarter and barley 27 shillings? Find by practice the value of 343 cwt. 2 qrs. 13 lbs., at £2, 16s. 8½d. per cwt.

What is meant by balancing an account? Explain the difference between bookkeeping by single and double entry. State the uses of the cash-book—the journal—the ledger.

The above questions were used at the examination in Easter; those selected for the autumn examination following, were more

searching, and embraced a wider range of subjects. We select the following from the questions for the schoolmistresses :

SCRIPTURE HISTORY.

Give an account of the life and character of Saul. Mention some of the miracles wrought by Peter. Quote passages from Scripture declaring the providence of God. State what you know about king Herod and the members of his family. Why was St. Paul sent a prisoner to Rome? Narrate his voyage thither, and shipwreck. Write out the list of the books of the New Testament, with the names of their authors. Compare the knowledge of the future state as possessed by the Jews, and quote passages on this point. C. J. C.

THOMAS JEFFERSON ON SCHOOL GOVERNMENT.

It has been remarked, with some truth, that it was the fate of Mr. Jefferson to be more beloved by his friends, and more hated by his enemies than any statesman of his time.

That a man who could make so many mistakes in judgment, indulge in so many personal animosities, entertain sentiments so averse to those of the best men of his time, and yet, without ever making a speech in his life, reach the summit of popular renown, and almost eclipse, for a time, the fame of Washington himself, can only be attributed to the peculiar contingencies of the times into which he was thrown. The institutions of the past found almost no favor in the eyes of Jefferson; and he seemed as ready to overthrow the church, the Bible, the institution of slavery, the medical science, and even the administration of the illustrious Washington, as to resist the measures of the court of St. James, and the tyranny of George the Third. In his eyes, England had no virtues, and France, even in the days of her bloody revolution, no faults. Jefferson was born for revolution. He not only held to stripping human institutions of their sanctity, but he even formed, for his own use, an expurgated edition of the holy evangelists.

Not satisfied with speculating upon political government, he tried his skill at perfecting the government, or rather no-government, of the University of Virginia. Prof. Tucker, the friend and biographer of Jefferson, gives the following history of his plan, and the success with which it met:

“ In framing the laws of the government of the University, as well as for the course of instruction, Mr. Jefferson had almost the sole agency. Believing that the authority of govern-

ment is often needlessly exerted, and the restraints of law are too much multiplied, he allowed more latitude and indulgence to pupils than was usual. He limited the term of the presiding officer of the institution to only one year—to be held by each professor in rotation—and he did not receive the ordinary designation of president, but of chairman, ‘by way of marking the limited and peculiar character of his functions.’ These liberal and indulgent views well accorded both with the temper of the professors, and their inexperience, and they undertook to conduct a body of youth by appeals to their reason, their hopes, and to every generous feeling, rather than to the fear of punishment, or dread of disgrace. The imperfection of this system was not long in manifesting itself. It was found that though these mild measures may do for many, perhaps the far greater number, it will not do for all.

“The consequences of this error were serious, and well-nigh proved destructive to the early prosperity of the institution. Nightly disorders were habitual with the students, until passing from step to step, they reached a point of riot and excess to which the forbearance of the professors could no longer extend, when the students considered their rights violated, and openly resisted the authority of the faculty. More deep mortification, more poignant distress, could not be felt than was experienced by Mr. Jefferson. The following day he came down, with the other visitors from Monticello, which was their head-quarters, summoned the students into their presence, and they were addressed in short speeches by himself, Mr. Madison, and Mr. Chapman Johnson. The addresses of these men,—the two first venerable by their years, their services, and their authority—could not be resisted. The offenders came forward, one by one, and confessed their agency. Among those who thus almost redeemed their past errors by their manly course, was one of his own nephews. The shock which Mr. Jefferson felt when he for the first time discovered that the efforts of the last ten years of his life had been foiled and put in jeopardy by one of his family, was more than his own patience could endure, and he could not forbear from using, for the first time, the language of indignation and reproach. Some of the offenders, among them his nephew, were expelled by the faculty, and others were more lightly punished. Their offensive memorial was withdrawn, the exercises of the university were resumed, and under a system liberal without being lax, a degree of order and regularity has been progressively increasing, and is supposed to be now nowhere exceeded.”

THE TEACHER'S INFLUENCE.

MUCH has been said and written of the great responsibility resting upon the teacher. But much more deeply must the teacher feel that each word and act, yes, often a look, has its influence for good or evil, before he will accomplish the whole amount of good in his power.

How shall this influence be exerted in the most happy manner? The whole soul must be full of interest in the employment, so that other cares may not find room to enter; the temper and state of the feelings must be constantly watched, lest our example be not a perfect one; and then we must be wise to improve every opportunity of arousing and stimulating noble sentiments in the minds of young immortals.

The mind of the teacher must be full of interest in the employment. He may say "Important duties call for my attention out of school hours." Ought this to be the case, to any great extent? What says experience? When are we prepared to accomplish the most good? When our minds are burdened with other cares, even till we are in the midst of the interesting throng? Or when classes and individual scholars have been summoned up in imagination, with the inquiry, How can I improve this class? Is that child pursuing such studies, and in such a manner, as will promote its best welfare? But shall the teacher think and speak of nothing but school and its duties? By no means. But the school should be the one great object, and other engrossing cares should not occupy the mind at the same time.

The temper and feelings must be watched. Teacher, did you ever enter the school-room some uncomfortable, stormy morning, with your mind dwelling upon some vexatious circumstance, feeling conscious that your countenance was more threatening than the clouds, and almost sure that something would occur to cause this unpleasant state of mind to manifest itself? If not, be grateful for a happy temperament. When thus enveloped in clouds, let us seek earnestly for sunshine, and soon will it appear *within*, if not without the school-room.

But I would speak principally of improving opportunities for usefulness. It is a bright summer's morning. Groups of children may be seen wending their way to yonder pleasant school-house. And now the teacher comes among them. Nine o'clock has not yet arrived, and the doors are not opened. While the girls gather around the flowers their own hands have planted, watching carefully to see if any tiny bud has unfolded in the dew, the little boys, with rosy cheeks and weary limbs, seat themselves upon the door-steps. Little George draws a long breath, and says,—“O, dear, I should not much care if the

key did not come to-day, should you, James?" "No," says James, "I do not love to come to school very well, do you, Eddy?" The teacher hears as though she heard them not. The doors are opened, the school goes on as usual. When our little folks have read, the teacher says, "Well done. You have read finely." Then glancing out at the open window, she adds, "Isn't this a beautiful day, children? I know it is warm out in the sun, but how cool and pleasant it is here. This is a nice place to stay in these warm days. I love to be here, do any of you?" "I do," "I do," they smilingly say, while George and James look as if they would be glad to join them. Then the teacher tells them of the pleasant play at recess, the cool water at the pump, to wash their bright faces, and promises to smooth their hair nicely for them when they come in; and they will walk softly to their seats, their little hearts full of happiness, which shines out at their eyes, and the influence may be such that they will never again say or think, "I do not love to go to school."

Would you call forth and cherish the purest emotions of which the young mind is susceptible? Cultivate a taste for the beautiful in nature and art, especially a love for flowers, those beautiful gifts so lavishly bestowed by our Creator. Despise them not as little things. Small though they be, have they not been the theme of some of the sweetest lays of the poets? And has not a wiser than the poets prized their simple beauty above the gorgeous apparel of the most wealthy of earth's monarchs?

A little child, too young to be in the school-room, was sauntering alone in summer. A teacher met him, and directed his attention to the pretty flowers by the way-side. He began gathering them, as they were pointed out to him. He was told to ask his mother to put them in a glass of water, and then left, apparently delighted with his employment. Five years afterwards, that teacher received a gift of fragrant flowers from the little lad, who had probably forgotten the circumstance, and could not have told how he came to love the flowers so dearly. And should he live to manhood, we venture to predict that his home will be a tasteful one.

It is a cloudy day in midsummer. The air of the school-room seems more close than usual. Some of the young people appear fatigued, some playful, and very few deeply interested in their studies. The teacher, after calling their attention, says, "You know little Jane has been sick a long time. She cannot come to school, she cannot go out to play. Who would like to send her a bouquet of flowers?" Every hand is raised, every face lighted up. The children are requested to bring their flowers in the afternoon. The table is loaded, the bouquet arranged—a splendid one—a note written by the teacher

in behalf of the scholars, and a messenger from their number despatched with the gift to the sick room. Who shall venture to limit the influence of this little act?

Does a child come to you with its morning offering? Repeat to it, "I never threw a flower away," &c. Impress the mind of another with the sentiment that "Flowers are heavenly, as no one can indulge unholy thoughts, or deliberately sin while admiring beautiful flowers." When you walk with them in the silent forest, speak to them of

"The dim old woods,
Where even flower-bells have a low, sad toll,
As they bend down to die in solitude."

A gentleman who is doing much for the cause of education,—one whose voice alone is music, and his language all poetry, paused, while addressing a public assembly, and said, "If I appear to you embarrassed, not perfectly at ease, it is because I have nothing to encourage me. There are no *flowers* about me."

The influence of *music* over the mind, is generally acknowledged. Some misunderstanding had arisen among the young ladies of a certain school. Day after day their brows were clouded, and their minds disturbed. What could the teacher do? She had recommended mutual forbearance, but still the trouble remained. Long she meditated, and then her purpose was formed. A new song had been promised to them, and this should be the time for it. Still there was doubt whether they could join in it, with their present feelings. The next morning, before school, the teacher spoke to one and another, as they arrived, and called their attention to the song. Their ears were tuned to melody, and they had sweet voices. The piece was sung to them, and was so exactly in accordance with their taste, that they could not forbear glancing at each other, and each met an answering smile. Again and again was it rehearsed, and they were requested to join. One after another they united their voices, and soon performed it to the satisfaction of all. As they walked, arm in arm, to their seats, you might ask, "Where are now their bitter feelings?" And echo might answer, "Where?" All were hushed to perfect peace. Well has a poet of our own day said,

"Some songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer."

Seek for opportunities to do good. A lad, while attending school, formed a determination to go to sea. His parents were

averse to it, and tried to persuade him to abandon the project. But all to no purpose. To sea he must go. As the teacher was walking, after school one day, she saw the youth at a distance, and instantly her purpose was formed. She turned her steps and pursued him. Overtaking him, she soon spoke of his plans, and he freely expressed his determination. She told him of the anxiety of his parents, and his duty to them. She spoke to him of the present state of his education, and showed him how much more honorable and agreeable a station he might occupy, even on board of a vessel, after acquiring more knowledge connected with navigation. Long and faithfully she labored with him, till day faded into twilight, and twilight deepened into night. At length the point was gained. He promised to abandon his project for the present, to continue his attendance at school, and fit himself for a higher station. And now, should he follow the sea, he will go forth a wiser young man, or, as his mind develops, it is not unlikely that his tastes may change, and incline him to some occupation more congenial to the feelings of his friends.

But it may be asked, "What is to become of the teaching? Are not Geography, Arithmetic, &c., to be learned?" Certainly. The best methods of teaching each branch of study, should be carefully weighed, and information sought from every source. But these important topics I leave to others as themes of discussion, feeling that one may carefully instruct in every branch required to be taught in the schools, and yet but half perform the work of a faithful teacher. "This ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

B. L. A.

Rockville.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION.

I WOULD be very far from depreciating the value of statistical information in regard to the condition of the institutions of our country; but the observation of every year induces me to be more suspicious of the correctness of any inference founded on statistics alone. It seems to be generally admitted that figures cannot lie; but statistics which do not embrace all the elements on which our decisions should be based, are not only liable to deceive the reader, but to do great injustice to persons who would stand in a far different light, were the facts fully developed; and, in this respect, they often tell what is equivalent to the grossest falsehood. Let me illustrate: To two schools, in the same town or city, a list of questions is put by a committee, and the results of the examination are officially published before the community. Now

there are but few persons who will not receive a comparatively unfavorable impression in respect to the teacher whose school has met with the poorer success in this examination. But if a full investigation of facts were made, it might be found that the school of the more unsuccessful teacher is in such a locality that it is patronized by a class of poorer children, who enter his school with inferior merits, whose attendance is rendered irregular by the circumstances of the parents, and who leave school for the workshop at an early age. Moreover, it might appear, upon close examination, that this teacher is far more conscientious, more punctual, more anxious to improve the manners, and to instruct the heart of his pupils, and, in a word, a better teacher, than his more fortunate rival. It is so difficult to record a teacher's moral and social influence, and to represent all the varied circumstances which modify his success, in a table of statistics, that great caution should be used in regard to parading before the community the results of any partial examination.

The truth is, that statistics are not so correct and reliable as they seem to be. Take for example the Registrar's records of deaths in Massachusetts. From the Report of the Sanitary Committee, based upon these records, it appears that shoemakers live but little over forty years, while farmers live beyond sixty. How natural is the inference that the life of the shoemaker is, on the average, twenty years shorter than that of the farmer! But it will appear, on close inspection of facts, that most shoemakers leave "the seat" at middle age, and, in a great many cases, become farmers. To infer, therefore, that shoemaking is unfavorable to health because the deaths of very few aged shoemakers are recorded in the Registrar's books, is somewhat like concluding that going to college is almost fatal to life and health, because these books show no record of the death of a college student whose age is over thirty years, or gravely asserting that old age is very favorable to longevity!

If we are to be rated, priced, and labelled according to our relative value, let our supervisors trust to their eyes, their good sense, and their impressions founded on frequent observation, and, if they are honest men, we have little fear of receiving injustice at their hands. The rapidity of thought knows no limits, and it is not certain, after all, that the judgment of an intelligent man who spends fifteen minutes in a school-room, is not founded upon a greater number of facts, marshalled in beautiful and mysterious order in the mind, than ever appeared in any table in any school Report!

The question whether it is either wise or just, on the part of a School Committee, ever to publish any comparative statistics of schools, admits, in my mind, of very serious doubt. If every

teacher exerts his utmost energies, yet some one must stand at the foot of the list, and why should the members of our profession be inspected, compared, ranked, graded, arranged in a line, like school-boys, from the head to the foot of the class, and thus shown up before the community? What other profession would bear it? What mortal is so much supervised, examined, visited, criticised, questioned, reported and voted upon, as the schoolmaster? And then what advantage is there in telling one half of the parents that their children are attending a poorer class of schools than the children of the other half? Will it make their children more respectful and obedient? Will it lighten the burden and cheer the heart of the teacher, who stands at the foot? Surely, if a teacher is unworthy of his place, there is a way to remove him; but so long as he is retained, let not his pupils be publicly and officially told that theirs is the meanest teacher in the town. I am aware that I differ from men whose opinions are of great weight in matters of education, but I believe that the teacher who will not profit by the private and friendly suggestions of his supervisors, will receive but little benefit by being posted, as an inferior instructor, in the Committee's Report.

Resident Editors' Table.

GEORGE ALLEN, Jr., *Boston*, } RESIDENT EDITORS. { JOHN D. PHILBRICK, *Boston*,
 CALEB EMERY, *Boston*, } { D. B. HAGAR, *W. Roxbury*.

THE PHONETIC EXHIBITION

BEFORE THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

THIS exhibition took place in the Representatives' Hall, in Boston, on the 3d of March, in presence of a large audience, among whom we noticed His Excellency Governor Boutwell, Hon. N. P. Banks, Speaker of the House, Hon. Amasa Walker, Secretary of State, and other minor notables. The object of this exhibition was to induce the Legislature to make Phonetics one of the required studies in the Common Schools.

Dr. James W. Stone is the leading advocate of this system, and whatever man can do to bring it into vogue he will do. His enthusiasm is equalled only by his energy and perseverance. Besides, he is a skilful master of all the arts of the politician, and knows how to apply them to the furtherance of his objects. The Doctor has a very winning way with him, and he seems to be actuated by high and benevolent motives. The exhibition at the State House was conducted by him with his usual tact and courteous urbanity. Indeed, we have never seen his "practicability" work more successfully.

"Phonetics" was the "subject of his story." Under this head Phonography was advocated as the best system of Stenography. Then it was argued that Phonotopy, or the Phonetic Alphabet of Pitman, was the shortest cut to the common orthography and reading. And, finally, it was urged that the present system of printing and writing should be utterly abolished, and Phonography and Phonotopy substituted in its place.

Rev. Hubbard Winslow, a member of the School Committee of Boston, being called upon to state his opinion, said that he thought a child might save two years of his life, by the use of the Phonetic Alphabet. Mr. Secretary Walker took a peep at that statement through his glass of "Political Economy," and saw the "*stupendous*" fact that two years multiplied by 200,000, the number of children of school age in the State, would amount to 400,000 years of time which each generation might save by this reform.

This was the sixty-ninth exhibition of the four girls from the Phonetic School who performed most of the exercises on this occasion. The exercises were reading from the common print and the Phonetic, spelling, analyzing or spelling by sounds, and reading Phonography from the blackboard.

These performances were very good, and were witnessed by the audience with great satisfaction. But we could not refrain from asking ourselves the question which a certain mathematician was accustomed to repeat—What does it prove? Every teacher of experience knows that reading and spelling equal to that exhibited might be produced with the same pains, in teaching without the use of Phonotopy.

The subject of Phonetics is one for teachers to weigh and consider. Let them do it carefully and thoroughly. Let no one adopt this or any other proposed innovation merely upon the authority of great names. Let them follow where the lights of reason and experience lead, and they will have to take no steps backwards.

P.

STATE REFORM SCHOOL IN MAINE.

THE government of Maine has been awakened, through the persevering labors of the efficient Secretary of the Board of Education in that State, to the importance of establishing a reformatory institution for the discipline and education of those juvenile offenders who, if not arrested in their downward course of vice and depravity in early life, will become confirmed pests and plunderers of society. In the last Annual Report of the Board of Education to the Governor, we find the following language respecting this enterprise:—

"Perhaps no institution of recent establishment, marks more strongly the character of the age, than Reform Schools. They are additional barriers in the downward course of youthful folly and vice, to check and save. When parents prove unnatural; when schools are neglected and school officers negligent; when the young offender has taken his first steps in crime, it is indeed a hopeful thing that the Reform Schools are opened to receive him before hardened by guilt, and shameless from punishment.

"Although the Reform School may not be intimately connected with our common schools, it is the result of the awakened interest in education, and has its foundation in the most enlarged benevolence. We regard it as a powerful auxiliary in the cause of education, and we hope that the work of its establishment in our State, so auspiciously commenced, may be carried on and completed."

From a recent report of the Commissioners on the proposed institution, we learn that a site for the building has been selected, and a contract made for its erection and completion. The estimated cost is \$52,800. Having examined similar institutions in several States, they came to the conclusion that the plan of the one now in operation in Massachusetts is the best, and have framed an act corresponding in its principal features with that under which the State Reform School at Westboro' is now conducted. That institution has been eminently successful. Its benefits are now so obvious that the establishment of an additional institution, or the enlargement of that now existing, has been recently recommended by the Executive of Massachusetts.

P.

PUTNAM FREE SCHOOL, NEWBURYPORT, MASS.

THIS Institution was founded by the munificence of Oliver Putnam, Esq., a native of Newbury, who provided by his will that it should be "a Free English School, for the instruction of youth, wherever they may belong." It was organized on the 12th of April, 1848, W. H. Wells, Esq., having been appointed Principal.

ADMISSION.—Candidates for admission to the school are examined in Reading, Writing, Spelling, Defining, Grammar, Geography, and Arithmetic. Most of the answers given by the candidates during their examination, are expressed in writing. The number of pupils at present is limited to one hundred.

COURSE OF INSTRUCTION.—Reading, Writing, Spelling, Elementary Sounds, English Grammar, Geography, Arithmetic, Ancient and Modern History, Bookkeeping, Algebra, Geometry, Plane and Spherical Trigonometry, Practical Surveying, Men-

uration, Conic Sections, Navigation, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Geology, Botany, Physiology, Rhetoric, Analysis of Milton and other Poets, Astronomy, Logic, Mental Philosophy, Moral Philosophy, Drawing, and the French Language. [Bookkeeping by Double Entry, Surveying, and Navigation, are not embraced in the course of instruction for the female department. Navigation, Bookkeeping by Double Entry, Logic, Conic Sections, Drawing, Geology, Physiology, and French, are optional with the pupils and their friends.]

MR. BARNARD'S BOOK ON NORMAL SCHOOLS.

IN a former number we spoke of this work in terms of commendation. A reperusal of it has served to confirm our first impression. If any one procures it expecting to find an elaborate historical composition on the subject of Normal Schools, he will be disappointed; but he will be happily disappointed. It is something much better than that. It is a rich compilation, and, therefore, all the more readable. The legislature could not do a better thing than to make a present of one copy to each town, together with the "School Architecture," by the same author. Wherever it goes it will make converts to Normal Schools, and hasten the good time when teaching shall be regarded as a regular profession, for which the best men in the community will think it worth their while to fit themselves.

No teacher should consider his library complete without this book.

P.

The Connecticut Common School Journal. New Series. Editor, Henry Barnard, Superintendent of Common Schools.

THIS double number for January and February, is devoted to a "Tribute to the Memory of Rev. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, LL. D.," by the editor. It is sufficient to say that the production is worthy of the writer and the subject. We wish this paper success.

P.

Moore's Rural New-Yorker.

THIS paper comes to our Table regularly, and a very welcome visitor it is. It is devoted to the two great interests of America, namely, Agriculture and Education, and is the *beau ideal* of a family paper. The Educational department is very ably conducted by L. Wetherell, Esq., a practical teacher in Rochester, and a whole-souled friend of popular education. We sincerely wish that such a paper might find its way to every fireside in the land.

P.

*ANNUAL REPORT of the Normal, Model and Common Schools
in Upper Canada, for 1850.*

THIS is a document of about 400 royal octavo pages, and contains a very full and minute account of the system of public instruction now in operation in Upper Canada. It is a very interesting and instructive volume. It lets us into a view of the progress of popular education in this large and growing province of the British dominions in North America; and a more delightful spectacle it has seldom been our fortune to enjoy. It presents one of the brightest pages in the history of this Continent. We commend the wisdom of Upper Canada, for she gives us abundant proof of her aptness to learn from the experience of other States. She has made a voyage of discovery throughout the whole civilized world, to find out what was most excellent in all the existing systems of education, and from their materials she has constructed one for her own children.

The principal agent whom she has employed in this work, and the author of the Report before us, is Rev. E. Kyerson, D. D., a gentleman who has demonstrated by the fruits of his labors, his singular fitness for the great enterprise which he undertook. The School System which he has built up shows in every part the hand of a master.

Ten years ago he came to Massachusetts to take lessons in popular education; but the time has arrived when Massachusetts might learn some useful lessons on the same subject in Upper Canada. We do not mean to say that the Schools of Upper Canada are superior to those in Massachusetts; but we believe that our schools might be made better than they are by adopting some of the features of her system.

The system of supervision is excellent. All the schools in the State are under the immediate care of local Superintendents who receive a liberal salary for their services. The minimum compensation of these offices is four dollars per school, and the maximum number of schools which any one superintendent shall have the oversight of, is one hundred.

More liberal appropriations have been made for the establishment of the Normal School at Toronto than for any similar institution in America. The government granted \$60,000 for the erection of a suitable building, while the one at Albany, the next in size, cost only \$25,000.

We propose to lay before our readers, as we have room, a sketch of the School System of Canada, and of the Normal and Model Schools at Toronto, and some of the questions used in examining the pupils of the Normal School.

Respecting the Common School System of Upper Canada, Mr. Barnard, in his work on Normal Schools, uses the following language :—

“The Province of Upper Canada, stimulated by the example of the neighboring State of New York, has within ten years organized a system of Common Schools more complete in its plan, more efficient in its administration, and embracing more of the agencies of educational progress than the system of any one of the United States. At the head of these agencies of progress stands the Provincial Normal School, for which, besides a standing appropriation of \$10,000 a year for the current expenses, the sum of \$55,000 [\$60,000] has just been almost unanimously voted by the Legislature, to provide a suitable building and apparatus for the accommodation of the school.”

P.

QUALIFICATIONS OF PUPILS FOR ADMISSION TO THE GRAMMAR SCHOOLS IN BOSTON.

“Any pupil may be admitted into the Grammar and Writing Schools, who, on examination by the Master or either of his Assistants, shall be found able to read, at first sight, easy prose; to spell common words of one or two syllables; to distinguish and name the marks of punctuation; to perform mentally such simple questions in addition, subtraction, and division, as are found in Part First of Emerson’s North American Arithmetic; to answer readily to any proposed combination of the Multiplication Table, in which neither factor exceeds ten; to read and write Arabic numbers, containing three figures and the Roman numerals as far as the sign for one hundred; and to enunciate, clearly and accurately, the elementary sounds of our language. And no pupil, who does not possess these qualifications, shall be admitted into any Grammar School, except by special permit of the Sub-Committee.

THE next Annual Meeting of the American Institute of Instruction will be held at Wilmington, Delaware, commencing on Friday, August 6th.

TEACHERS’ INSTITUTES

For the Spring of 1852, so far as they are arranged.

- At Leominster, March 22—27.
- “ Woburn, March 29—April 3.
- “ Sheffield, April 5—10.
- “ Deerfield, April 12—17.
- “ Wrentham, April 19—24.
- “ Fall River,